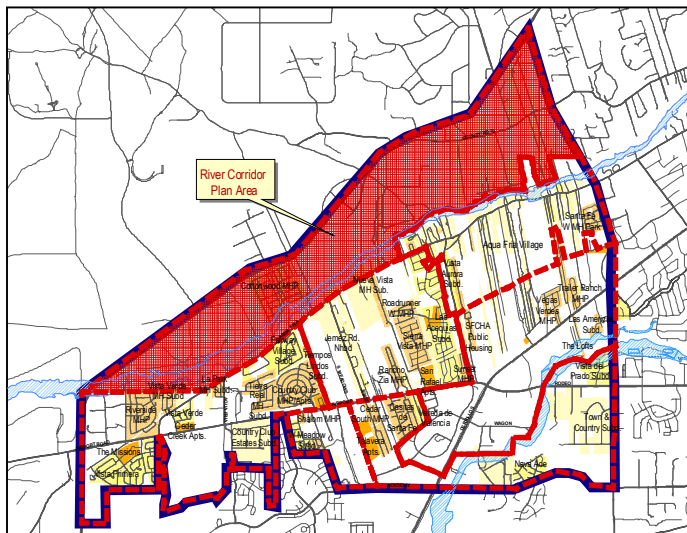


River Corridor Plan Area

Unit Area Description

The River Corridor Plan Area is the largest of the neighborhood units (see Map 2.6.1), comprising approximately 1426 acres or 28% of the total planning area. In addition, the entire area falls exclusively outside of the city limit boundary.



Map 2.6.1 River Corridor Plan Area

The plan area predominately consists of large vacant tracts, undevelopable lands or easement and right-of-way. Undeveloped acreage constitutes approximately 62% of the planning area, including the Santa Fe River channel and floodplain area.¹

The prominent land use feature or defining characteristic for the neighborhood plan area (as well as the Southwest Plan Area in general) is the Santa Fe River.²

Most of the current land uses draw from or relate directly to the natural, historical or cultural resources of the river itself. This is what makes the River Corridor (and the Agua Fria Village) unique and gives it a sense of community and place.

Existing Land Uses and Urban Forms

A summary of the existing land uses is illustrated in Table 2.6.1 below. As noted, the

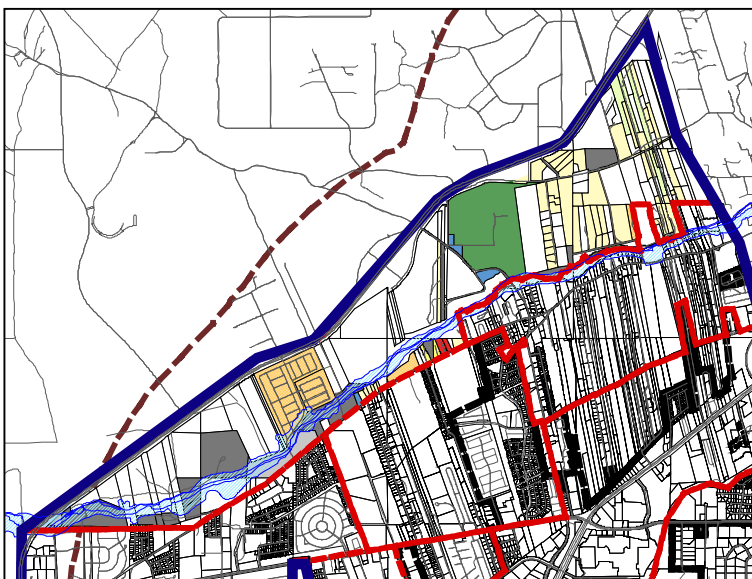
Existing Land Uses	Total Acreage	% of Total
Undeveloped	668.8	47%
Rural Residential	25.4	2%
Residential Very Low Density	162.7	11%
Residential Low Density	3.3	0%
Residential Medium Density	90.5	6%
Park	108.4	8%
Institutional	7.5	1%
Commercial	5.5	0%
Industrial	139.0	10%
Easement/ROW/Other	215.1	15%
Total	1426.1	100%

Table 2.6.1. Existing Land Use Summary

¹ The calculations exclude the Santa Fe River confluence contained within the Agua Fria THC.

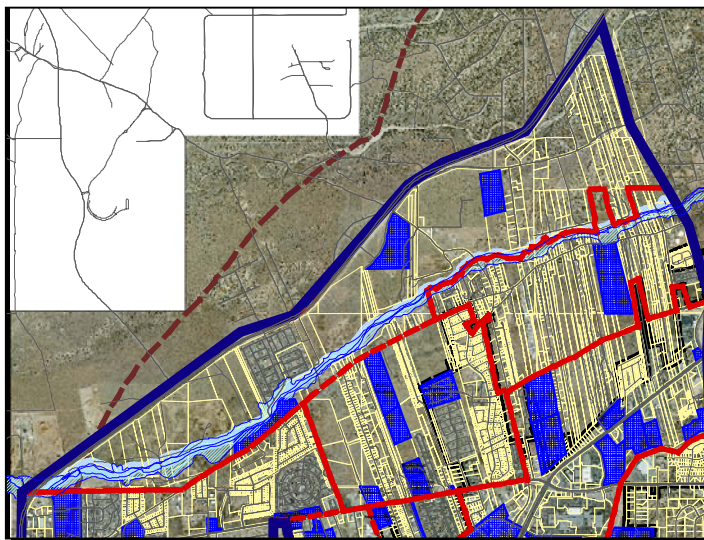
² Principle 10 of the *Final Report* identifies the river as "an important landmark...that should be protected and easements created to provide residents with access to the river."

plan area remains predominantly undeveloped or, to a less extent, undevelopable due to right-of-way or floodplain. The present land uses tend to be founded within the river itself—ranging from gravel mining operations along the river to rural/traditional residential uses that radiate longitudinal and perpendicular to the river as a reflection of the past dependence on water for agricultural uses (see Map 2.6.2). These varying uses of land illustrate the “centerdness” that the river has provided to the people who have lived among it and the important role it continues to play today.



Map 2.6.2. Existing Land Use Patterns for the Area

There has been a developing “shift”, however, towards a de-emphasis of uses related to the river itself. This is most apparent in recent residential urbanization patterns such as the Cottonwood Mobile Home Park where development has adopted a more suburban pattern that, in this example, de-emphasizes the natural or environmental setting. The adoption of more contemporary land use patterns is mostly the result of the extension of utilities north of the river. This trend is likely to continue based on current development application approvals and recent submittals (see Map 2.6.3), however, this trend remains dependent, for the most part, on the continued availability of municipal utilities to the area.



Map 2.6.3. Pending or Approved Future Development

The area that lies south of the river (and mostly north of Agua Fria Road) has developed in the more compact Agua Fria model form—rather than the long-lot traditional patterns of the north, it has taken on the patterns more related to Agua Fria Road and the Village itself. The patterns within this section of the plan area are a continuation from the Agua Fria Village and are desirable, unique and appropriate.³

³ Principle 9 of the *Final Report* states that areas contiguous to the Santa Fe River should be developed with a similar pattern to that of the Agua Fria Village.

Activity Centers and Neighborhood Cores

The River Corridor is unique to other planning areas in that the principal activity center, the Santa Fe River, is a natural and historical landmark that serves the entire southwest sector of Santa Fe⁴. One of the ten principles within the *Final Report* calls for the creation of easements along the river for the purpose of public access and protection of the river as a valued natural resource. This topic was also one of the highest scoring community values tested in public review during the visioning process. This premise was again tested during the neighborhood workshops—with similar responses. There appeared to be an overwhelming belief that the river should be protected and be accessible to the community as a whole. The idea of a River Protection Zone (discussed under Future Land Uses, this section) was clearly the primary objective of the planning group.



Santa Fe River at the State Land Office Tract

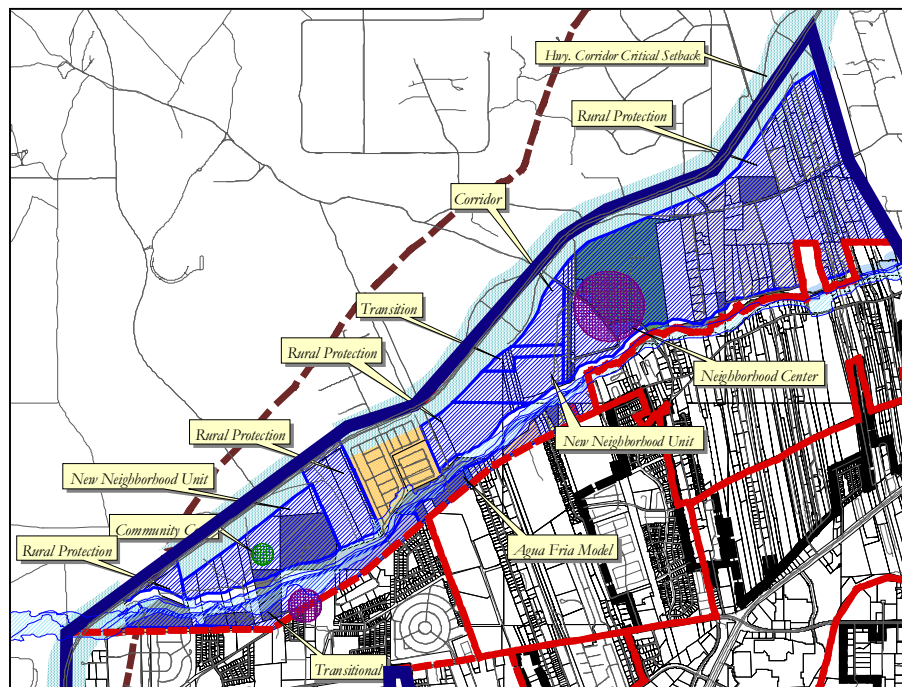
Another activity center for the area is the Santa Fe County Agua Fria Park. The park has recently been renovated and provides the largest percentage (65%) of active public park space for the Southwest Area. The park is located adjacent to the river, and is surrounded by a variety of institutional uses that create the area's only formal neighborhood center. Since neighborhood centers and cores are more common in developed and/or urban areas, the deficiency of centers or cores is not unexpected. Should future development occur, however, centers and cores should be incorporated as part of the creation of new neighborhoods. These centers should also be connected to the river through pedestrian trails and other public easements that would allow new neighborhoods to be connected to each other via the river trail spine.

Proposed Neighborhood Pattern Areas

Because of the vast acres of undeveloped lands, the planning participants have declared much of the plan area as future neighborhood pattern areas. These include all possible combinations of development patterns, including rural protection areas, corridors, transition, new neighborhood units and Agua Fria model areas (see Map 2.6.4).

⁴ The exception is the relationship of the Arroyo de los Chamisos to the Southeastern Plan Area. It, too, serves as the major activity center for the plan unit, however, the Santa Fe River represents a cultural and historical center for the region as well as serving as a natural and environmental landmark. In both cases, providing public access and promoting these natural environs for recreational amenity will further promote their importance as regional activity centers. They will also both serve as two of the three major Santa Fe urban trail spines.

When the future typology (neighborhood pattern) areas were being developed for the *Final Report*, the area north of the river was referenced as areas most probable for rural protection designation.⁵ The planning group opted to apply rural protection areas in two forms—those areas that represent a continuation of the Agua Fria (traditional, long-lot) forms directly north of the river and those areas that represent large vacant tracts of lands that have direct access to the river and that could be encouraged to develop in rural patterns that are similar or compatible with the Agua Fria model.



Map 2.6.4. Neighborhood Pattern Designations with the River Corridor Plan Area

The corridor and corresponding transitional uses coincide with an approved master plan development (the Village Center) for the center of the plan area. The group then “stepped back” the adjacent development patterns to include a new neighborhood unit.

Adjacent to the Cottonwood MHP, the planning group applied rural protection areas to encourage rural patterns where there was direct access to the river. Further west, the group then chose to apply the new neighborhood concept where existing residential densities are more in keeping with urban patterns and standards.⁶ This would be in keeping with historical development trends of movement from south to north. In addition, the group expressed an interest in continuing and promoting the Agua Fria Model south of the river/north of Agua Fria Road to the Village boundary.

⁵ This general observation was not meant to preclude other areas south of the river which may also be appropriate for designation. The Final Report also states that other areas may be suitable for rural protection depending on criteria such as natural or environmental features or other characteristics that would create a unique, rural setting.

⁶ Urban development trends within the western quadrant of the Southwest Area has historically been a “south to north” direction. In other words, urbanization within the Southwest Area has been from south to north within the western section of the study boundary.

In summary, the overriding design for the variety of future neighborhood pattern designations would be to allow for continued urban development within the western quadrant, create rural protection areas within large vacant “pockets” as well as within the area north of the Village, provide for urban development in the center of the corridor where master plan approval is in place and future roads⁷ have been planned and approved, and continue the Agua Fria Model pattern south of the River.

Future Land Uses

In keeping with the goal of protecting the Santa Fe River and providing for public access for all residents, the most significant future land use designation is the creation of a River Protection Zone. This concept was originally suggested within the *Final Report* as a development building block which included the following language:

“Access to the river will require the creation of a River Protection Zone that would border the Santa Fe River and floodplain for a depth of 200 to 350 feet. “

In three of the four neighborhood workshops, different protection zone scenarios⁸ were tested with respect to corridor depths, both on the north and south side of the river as well as different description language for the zone. After several renditions, the planning group has recommended a River Protection Zone that would include, at a minimum, the floodway itself (bank to bank), a 200-foot public access easement as measured from the northern floodway boundary on the north side of the river, and a required setback of 75 feet on the south side of the river as measured from the southern boundary of the river floodway. In most cases, the natural floodplain (using the City’s most recent GIS data coverage for FIRMA) includes a 200 to 350 foot depth, so most of area slated for public access would fall within the floodplain, however, in no case shall the northern public access easement be less than 200 feet, irrespective of the floodplain width. The recommended setback along the southern bank has been suggested based on the location of current structures along the southern banks of the river.⁹

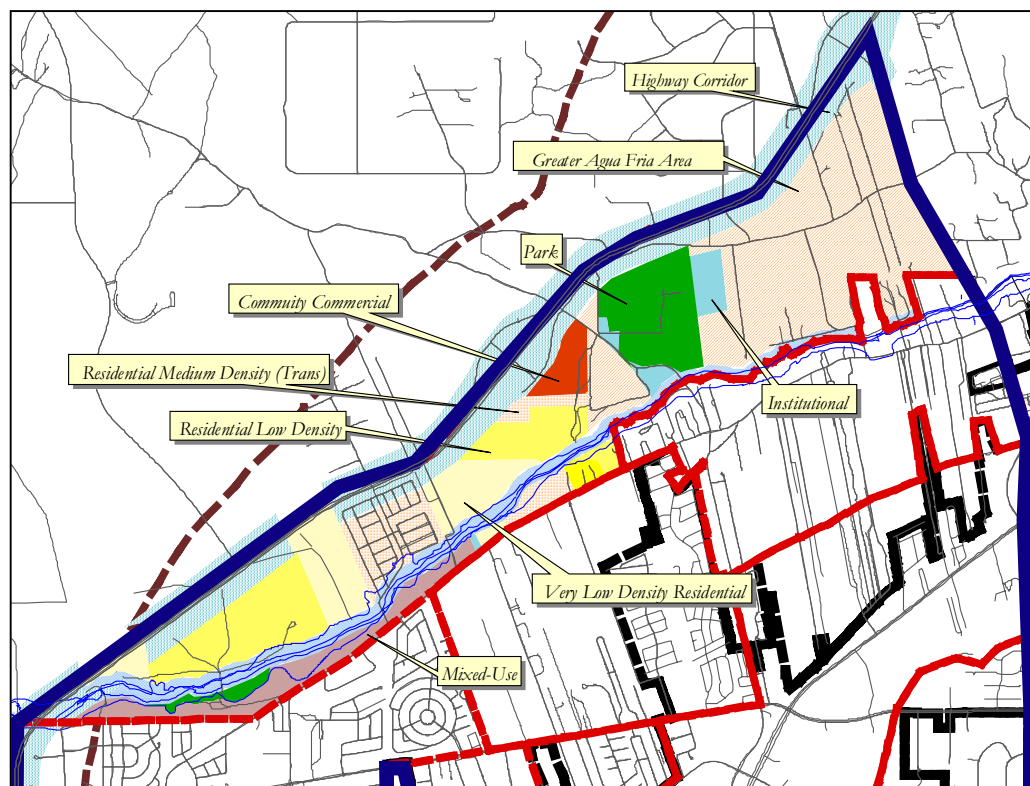
The recommended future land uses, based on the combination of present uses and future neighborhood pattern designations are illustrated in Map 2.6.5. It is suggested that the area directly north of the Agua Fria THC remain as the “Greater Agua Fria Area” designation to promote continuity of the patterns north and south of the river, as well as a recognition of the strong community identity to Agua Fria Village. The remaining areas designated as rural protection areas have been recommended as a “Residential Very Low Density” future land use designation since these areas are predominately vacant. In literal translation, the densities typically would not fall within the 1-3 du/ac, but rather somewhere within the 2.5 to 10 acres per dwelling unit range. The City’s General Plan

⁷ This is based on the ARTF Future Roads Plan that provides for convergence of CR62 and the South Meadows Extension near the designations.

⁸ Different mapping techniques were incorporated, including matching aerial imagery with vector data to compare different setback scenarios. This made the zone more translatable to a “real world” scenario, where those boundaries might actually be located relative to an individual’s property.

⁹ Where current regulations are in place that governs structural setback requirements or dedication of public easement, the most restrictive regulations would prevail. The River Protection Zone, for purposes of this plan, is a recommended policy guideline. Until regulatory mechanisms are put in place to enforce these guidelines, they are to be considered a matter of policy. Dedication of public easement is also not intended to apply to developed properties. Dedication would only be required within the context of developing lands or the expansion of some use where dedication would be required. Again, this would have to be codified for it to be enforceable. Acquisition of public easements, however, is not subject to regulatory constraint.

provides no corresponding future land use category, which would accommodate this range of density, therefore, the most function classification was the designation suggested. Within the rural protection areas, the actual densities may develop below the 1 du/ac. threshold, particularly where urban services have not been or are not planned to be extended. In those cases, a much more typical rural density would be considered appropriate.



Map. 2.6.5. Proposed Future Land Uses for the River Corridor Plan Area

South of the river, the planning group applied a mixed-use designation to the majority of the lands along Agua Fria Road. This group believed that “Mixed-Use/Transitional” was the “best fit” for the uses that currently exist along the north side of Agua Fria Road, given many of the uses are currently a home-business operation or live/work type use. It also closely expressed the types of uses that have recently been approved for that area, including live/work art studios along the river.

Finally, members of the planning group, as well as several representatives from the Agua Fria community, have expressed an interest in exploring a possible rural protection ordinance for their area. Several participants stated that other communities in northern New Mexico have developed this type of regulation to protect rural, agricultural lands.

This type of land use control could be developed during the implementation/zoning revision process of the third phase of the master planning effort. It is expected that as the new neighborhood pattern areas are translated into development standards¹⁰, a rural

¹⁰ It is expected that these development standards would be applied as zoning overlay districts in addition to the underlying “conventional” zoning. A rural protection ordinance could theoretically serve as the zoning

protection ordinance could simultaneously serve as the type of regulatory standard for rural protection areas. It would ultimately be at the discretion of the governing body, however, as to the appropriateness of development of such an ordinance for their community.

overlay for the rural protection areas. Other City zoning districts that would also need to be developed would include a mixed-use district and the neighborhood center district. The latter may be achieved by revising the current SC-1, Planned Shopping Center Zoning District to be in keeping with neighborhood-serving, contemporary retail development as well as the intent of this project.
